“God’s architecture lends itself to eavesdropping” (Elizabeth Knox)
Post 5x08, Pre 5x10 AU scene thing. PG, has Raphael n Castiel n Gabriel in it. Kind of a character study, actually.

Castiel returned to the circle of fire, tense and cautious as he touched down in the house that contained Raphael.

"Castiel," Raphael greeted him, and there was no fire.

Castiel's first instinct was to run, to flee, but instead he tensed and gripped his sword tighter. Raphael could follow him to anywhere he ran, and he did not doubt that Raphael would run him to ground.

"Raphael," Castiel answered.

"It was foolish of you to return here."

"Yes."

Raphael regarded him with cold eyes, and smiled unkindly.

"You have forgotten your purpose, Castiel."

"It is too soon to end their world, Raphael," Castiel said. "We do not have the right to finish this."

"If we don't," Raphael said with a mocking laugh, "then who will stop us? Those Winchesters? No. No, Castiel, we have the right."

Castiel glared defiance, and Raphael stared right back, and he seemed impossibly larger, to be filling the room with his presence.

"Now," Raphael summoned his sword, his weapon appearing in his hand with a burst of light. "I cut you down, once. I will now do so again."

Castiel stiffened, sword held up, aware that he didn't have a chance in hell of surviving this.

Raphael stepped forward, and then the world turned sideways as Castiel was *yanked* away from Raphael, pulled away from Maine.

Castiel saw Raphael's face contort with rage, and then he was gone.

Castiel landed in a clearing, sword almost dropping to the grass before he regained his grip.

He had escaped one archangel to land in the lap of another: "Gabriel."

"The one and only. Stop jumping into the fire like that, will you? Pulling you out was a lot more complicated that I wanted to deal with this early in the day."

"Why are you - "

"Helping? Nah. I was just eavesdropping, and any chance to mess with Raphael like that is one I'm gonna take."

Castiel lowered his sword slowly, still tensed.

"I fixed up the etchings on your vessel's ribs, by the way. He can't find you with the archangelic cheat codes he's got."

"Eavesdropping." Castiel said quietly.

"Hard not to, with Raphael advertising like that." Gabriel shrugged, unwrapping a chocolate bar. "I suggest getting back to whatever your Winchesters are up to, before I get bored with you."

"...you saved my life. Thank you." Castiel said quietly, and vanished with the sound of wings.

Gabriel just shook his head, muttering, "God would've brought you back again, bro," before he took a bite of his chocolate.